

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LONDON 01786 011750Z
ACTION SS-25

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O R 011736Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0135
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 01786

EXDIS

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR, EEC, XF
SUBJECT: FOREIGN OFFICE BRIEFING ON JANUARY 31
EC FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING: THE MIDDLE EAST

REF: A)LONDON 1753; B)LONDON 1684; C)LONDON 1512
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1. AS WASHINGTON KNOWS, EC FOREIGN MINISTERS AGREED
JANUARY 31 ON TEXT OF STATEMENT CONTAINING EC CONSENSUS
VIEW ON THE MIDDLE EAST, BUT BECAUSE OF US DEMARCHE DID
NOT MAKE IT PUBLIC.

2. COMMENT: IT IS OUR IMPRESSION THAT THIS PROBLEM HAS

BEEN DELAYED BUT NOT DISMISSED. DESPITE EXPLICIT HIGH-LEVEL US CONCERNS ABOUT EC LANGUAGE WHICH CALLS FOR A TERRITORIAL BASE IN WHICH THE PALESTINIANS CAN EXPRESS THEIR NATIONAL IDENTITY, PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE GENEVA TALKS, AND AN EARLY RESUMPTION OF THOSE NEGOTIATIONS, THE FOREIGN MINISTERS RETAINED ALL THOSE OBJECTIONABLE ELEMENTS IN THEIR AGREED STATEMENT. OUR GUESS IS THAT A RELATIVELY SIMPLE HORSE-TRADE OCCURRED AMONG THE NINE ON MONDAY NIGHT. THE GERMANS AND THE BRITISH PROBABLY EXCHANGED DELAY OF THE STATEMENT FOR FRENCH INSISTENCE ON EC AGREEMENT TO ITS SUBSTANCE, A SUBSTANCE WITH WHICH THE FRG AND UK FUNDAMENTALLY CONCUR.

3. THUS, WE HAVE NOT PERSUADED THE COMMUNITY THAT OUR CONCERNS ON THIS MATTER ARE WELL FOUNDED. THIS ISSUE WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY BUBBLE UP AGAIN IN MARCH OR APRIL AFTER THE VARIOUS VISITORS HAVE CONCLUDED THEIR TRAVEL TO THE MIDDLE EAST. IT MAY BE THAT AT THAT POINT NEW CONDITIONS WILL MAKE THIS EC STATEMENT, AND OUR PROBLEMS WITH IT, IRRELEVANT. BUT IF THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST LOOKS THEN PRETTY MUCH AS IT DOES TODAY, THE FRENCH AND OTHERS MAY WELL INSIST THAT THE COMMUNITY'S VIEWS AS REFLECTED IN THE JANUARY 31 STATEMENT SHOULD BE MADE PUBLIC. IN ANY EVENT, WE WERE TOLD BY THE FCO THAT IN ANY SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSION OF AN EC STATEMENT, THIS TEXT WOULD CERTAINLY BE THE STARTING POINT. HAD NOT THE US RESISTED, THE NINE, WHO WERE AGREED ON THE SUBSTANCE, WOULD HAVE RELEASED THE TEXT MONDAY NIGHT. THIS IS CONFIDENTIAL

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PARTICULARLY TRUE SINCE WE UNDERSTAND THAT MORE THAN ONE FOREIGN MINISTER ARGUED THAT WASHINGTON WAS SIMPLY MISUNDERSTANDING THE NINE'S INTENTIONS AND THAT THERE WAS REALLY NO SUBSTANTIVE TRANS-ATLANTIC DIFFERENCE. IN VIEW OF THE ABOVE, WE RECOMMEND THAT THE US LOBBY STEADILY WITH THE NINE BETWEEN NOW AND MARCH/APRIL IN ORDER TO CONVINCE THE EC THAT ALTHOUGH WE CERTAINLY WANT THEIR COOPERATION IN EFFORTS TO BRING LASTING PEACE TO THE MIDDLE EAST, STATEMENTS LIKE THE ONE IN QUESTION WOULD HINDER RATHER THAN HELP THOSE EFFORTS.

4. FAILING THIS EDUCATIVE ATTEMPT BY THE US, AND IN THE ABSENCE OF WASHINGTON KEEPING THE EUROPEANS INFORMED ABOUT THE VANCE MISSION, WE FEAR THAT ANOTHER HARRIED US WEEKEND DEMARCHE WILL BE REQUIRED TO TRY TO REIN IN THE NINE, PROBABLY AT THE TIME OF THE NEXT MINISTERIAL POLITICAL COOPERATION MEETING APRIL 18-19, PERHAPS BEFORE.

SPIERS

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